REMARKS

Claims 50-69 remain in this application, with Claims 50-51, 55, 60 and 64 amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

As described in the Applicants' last response, an aspect of the present invention provides a more efficient way to assess the information accessible through a wide area network search on an Internet search engine or directory. In response to a query for information located on a computer network, map information is automatically collected or served from memory to provide more detailed information regarding particular "hits" returned by a search engine. The map information may be used, for example, to generate graphical maps summarizing the information to which a Web page provides access. A list of items responsive to a particular query is compiled, with items in the list associated with map information. Graphical maps of a search result in the list may be quickly displayed, for example, in response to a "mouse-over" of a listed item. Such maps may diagram links between pages, and in addition, may provide summaries or symbolic representations of other information, e.g., text or images, on the Web page. A person viewing search results can therefore more quickly determine whether a particular result is worthy of further inspection. Claims 50-69 are intended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim this aspect of the invention, which the prior art fails to disclose or to suggest.

Rejections of Claims 50-53, 55, 60-62, 64 and 68-69

The Examiner rejected Claims 50-53, 55, 60-62, 64 and 68-69 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberg. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Weinberg discloses a diagnostic tool to be used by a Webmaster in evaluating the performance and effectiveness of Web sites. The diagnostic tool shows relationships between interlinked web pages using "solar system" diagrams. Weinberg does not disclose automatically selecting or mapping non-hyperlinked objects. In addition, Weinberg does not disclose providing a list of identifiers associated with map

information in response to a query. Instead, Weinberg discloses mapping hyperlinks of dynamically generated web page, such as provided by a search engine in response to a query. Weinberg discloses nothing more than a mere hyperlink map of a search result page. Such a map provides no more information than the search result page itself. Further deficiencies of Weinberg are discussed below.

Claims 50, 60:

Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest automatic selection of both hyperlink and non-hyperlink objects in a set of related web pages, from which map information is generated, as defined by Claims 50 and 60. This step permits more useful maps to be generated, either in advance of a page being selected by a user for mapping, or in response to such a request. Instead, Weinberg discloses displaying a hyperlink map that graphically represents pages linked to the mapped page. A user may select one of the linked pages for further mapping, but such selection is not automatic. (Col. 26, line 32 – col. 27, line 10.)

Nor does Weinberg provide for any selection of non-hyperlink objects from within a mapped web page. The user may merely select another web page for mapping. (See, e.g., col. 10, lines 10-22.) This possibility would not render obvious the automatic selection process for non-hyperlink objects. The purposes, methods and results of the invention differ from what is disclosed by Weinberg. According to the invention, non-hyperlink objects are automatically selected for use in generating map information. The map information is provided as part of a response to a search query, to augment the query response by providing compact, quickly accessible summary information concerning each page returned by the query. In contrast, the dynamically-generated map disclosed in Weinberg does not contain information other than would already be available, in list form, in the query response page. Its purpose is merely to facilitate navigating to linked web pages, or monitoring hyperlink status. (Col. 10, lines 17-22; col. 27, lines 3-23.)

By the same measure, Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest generating map

information that comprises a descriptor of each of the automatically selected objects, wherein the objects include non-hyperlink information objects from web pages in a related set of pages, as also defined by Claims 50 and 60. Instead, Weinberg merely displays a "solar system" graphical representation of linked pages, that does not include descriptors of non-hyperlink objects in the web pages. (Col. 8, line 40 – col. 9, line 26.)

In addition, Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest the step of compiling a list in response to a query, wherein each item in the list is associated with non-hyperlink map information generated by the generating step, as also defined by Claims 50 and 60. Instead, Weinberg discloses dynamically generating a map of a search result page. (Col. 26, line 32 – col. 27, line 10.) Weinberg does not disclose providing any association between items in a list and non-hyperlink map information. To the contrary, Weinberg discloses replacing a search result page with a hyperlink map. Again, the purposes, methods and results of the invention differ from Weinberg, and therefore one of ordinary skill would not have been motivated to alter Weinberg in the manner proposed by the Examiner.

Claim 51:

Claim 51 further defines a process for generating map information such may be used to generate web maps according to the invention. Inputs to the process are defined to include the selected objects, which as further defined by base Claim 50, include non-hyperlink objects from individual pages. As discussed above, Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest automatically selecting such non-hyperlink objects, or using them to generate map information. Therefore, Weinberg necessarily fails to disclose or suggest the further limitations of Claim 51, which operate on non-hyperlink objects. The Examiner argued that Weinberg's use of icons to represent objects in a map of a search result page discloses the elements of Claim 51. This argument fails, because Weinberg fails to disclose representing or defining properties for any object that is not a hyperlink or a page addressed by a hyperlink.

Claims 55, 64:

Claims 55 and 64 define the use of thumbnail images in maps, wherein the images comprise "a reduced-size image generated from graphical information in the set of linked related pages." Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest the use of reduced-size images. The graphical icons cited by the Examiner are merely symbolic representations that correspond to types of web pages. The icons are not reduced in size. And the icons are not generated from a non-reduced size image. Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest these limitations. Claims 55 and 65 are therefore independently allowable, and are also allowable as depending from allowable base claims.

Claims 68, 69:

Claim 68 defines a network host with a memory holding executable instructions for cooperating with an application module operating on a client computer. As defined by Claim 60, the host further holds instructions for mapping target pages, generating map information and compiling lists responsive to information queries. In Claim 69, the imitations of Claim 68 further define the application module as being a distributable application. Weinberg fails to disclose or suggest these limitations. Instead, Weinberg discloses only an embodiment wherein application software for scanning a website and creating a graphical site map is installed on a client computer. (Col. 7, line 55 – col. 8, line 16.) In Weinberg, the client application scans target websites and creates the site map. The client application does not cooperate with a host that maps web pages and gathers map information. Weinberg therefore fails to disclose or suggest a host application with instructions for cooperating with a client application in the manner defined by Claims 68 and 69.

For the foregoing reasons, Claims 50 and 60 are therefore allowable. The remaining claims are also allowable, at least as depending from allowable base claims. In addition, Claims 51, 55, 64, 68 and 69 are independently allowable, for the reasons set forth above. All of these rejections should therefore be withdrawn.

Rejections of Claims 54, 56-58, 63 and 65-67

The Examiner rejected Claims 54, 56-58, 63 and 65-67 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberg and Astiz. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Astiz discloses generating and storing a navigational map for a web page. Astiz fails to disclose or to suggest compiling a list of mapped pages in response to a general information query, as defined by Claims 50 and 60. Therefore, Astiz does not make up for the deficiencies of Weinberg, and Claims 54, 65-58, 63 and 65-67 are allowable as depending from allowable base claims.

Rejection of Claim 59

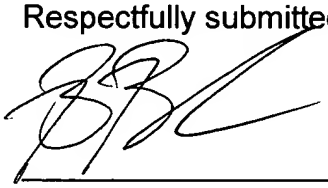
The Examiner rejected Claim 59 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Weinberg, Astiz, and Sitka. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Sitka merely discloses deleting information from a database after a period of time has elapsed, and does not concern the supply of mapped information in response to a general database query. Sitka does not make up for the deficiencies of Weinberg with respect to base Claim 50. Claim 59 is therefore allowable, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 50-69 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested, and a timely Notice of Allowability is solicited. If it would be helpful to placing this application in condition for allowance, the Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned counsel and conduct a telephonic interview.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition the Commissioner for a two-month extension of time, extending to February 3, 2005, the period for response to the Office Action dated September 3, 2004. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-0639.

Respectfully submitted,



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